

# "THEM MISSIONARY WOMEN"

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GRACE FUNK MYERS

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*Grace Frank Myers.*

# “THEM MISSIONARY WOMEN”

OR

WORK IN THE  
SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS

BY

GRACE FUNK MYERS

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HILLSDALE, MICH.

1911

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## PREFACE

This little book is not a fanciful and dramatic grouping of imaginary characters, but rather the weaving together of a chain of events and facts gathered while living and working among the mountain people of the south.

One noted writer has said: "Men's weaknesses and faults are known from their enemies; their virtues and abilities from their friends; and their customs and lives from their servants."

So we might say of the mountain people, about whom much has been said and written; their faults and weaknesses have too often been magnified by those who felt prejudiced and unfriendly toward them; while some of their over sympathetic friends, too willing to judge the whole by the conduct of a few who have done marvelously well, are given to writing and speaking

of them with undue praise and optimism for their future. But the faithful missionary, who out of necessity lives and works among them, becoming a servant for all, in his, or her, humble ministry, being "all things to all men that they might win some," are the ones who come in possession of the real facts and truth concerning the faults and virtues, the abilities and customs of the American Highlanders of the south.

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# “Them Missionary Women”

## Or Work in the Southern Mountains

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### CHAPTER I

#### A FOUR DAYS' TRIP OVER THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAIN

Two strong horses, a hack and an experienced driver were engaged to take Miss Grayson and myself for a long drive over the mountains. There was a lively time on that chilly October morning, loading the hack with such things as we were sure to need. A lunch box filled with eatables which would keep for several days, shawls, blankets, rubbers, umbrellas, satchels, and a long-handled gourd which we used for a dipper, were all deposited under the seats and we set out in good spirits, anticipating an interesting drive. We were not disappointed. The air was cool and bracing, the birds were

singing, and the squirrels ran playfully up and down the large trunks of the chestnut trees, having a rare feast, as the great brown chestnuts had just begun to ripen and fall.

As we traveled on over those rugged hills, viewing the heavy foliage so richly tinged with red and gold, the grand old pines towering up so high, forming a magnificent background for the ivy, the laurel, and the holly trees, beautifully decorated with clusters of red berries, we were so delighted and charmed with this unusual exhibition of God's handiwork in nature that our hearts were inspired with new thoughts of Him who so often retired to the mountains to pray, traveling over the hills of Judea seeking the lost, and comforting the poor and needy.

We passed log cabins daubed with mud, with open fire-places and stick chimneys; with puncheon floors and no glass windows; occupied by large families, whose chief employment seemed

to be hunting, fishing, and tending a small patch of corn or tobacco, often seen growing on the side of the mountain, where it is too steep for an ox or mule to travel; in such cases the mattock, spade, or hoe is used instead of the modern plow.

Stopping for a short time in one of these homes, we got our first glimpse of an old-fashioned spinning wheel, as there was, sitting in the middle of the room, one which showed signs of being in operation a short time before we arrived, as there was a fresh roll of wool on the spindle. It being the first one I had ever seen, I gave vent to my curiosity by asking permission to examine it, a machine which I knew had been very popular in my grandmother's day. But on handling the little three-legged structure, turning the wheel backward at my very first stroke, I appeared very ignorant and behind the times in the eyes of her who never as yet had thought of its being possible

to get along in the world without a spinning wheel. And suddenly to be brought face to face with a person who had never seen one caused her to fasten her dark eyes upon me with as much curiosity as I had displayed on viewing the wheel on first entering the room.

Her whole countenance was a great interrogation point, as she said with emphasis, "And you never seed a spinnin' wheel! An' yer don't know how ter spin?" After finding out that along some practical lines she possessed more knowledge than I, she waxed friendly and communicative, and with an air of self-importance and satisfaction turned toward the wheel and began to spin, that she might enlighten me more fully as to her own skill and the true worth of her wheel by showing me how rapidly she could transform the large round rolls into knitting yarn.

Her sister, living in the same neighborhood, not having enough money to buy wool for her winter stockings, dis-



played more perseverance than is commonly practiced by the average American girl. Going into the dense forest, with her own hands she split some rich pine boards from the trunk of a tree, and by setting them over a trench which she dug, keeping a fire near the timber, she succeeded in catching enough drippings to make a gallon of tar, which she carried on foot seven miles to the nearest town, selling it for thirty cents. With this hard earned money she purchased wool, which she then spun, and knit into stockings.

Our driver not taking enough grain with him to feed his horses, thought he could buy from the farmers by the way, but soon found that this was not an easy thing to do, as we were now passing through the moon-shine districts, where the corn was all used up by the corn whiskey manufacturers as soon as it was ready for market. Calling at a dozen homes, we were refused each time, all making the same excuse

for not selling, saying: "You see, stranger, we 'uns have jist got barely enough corn ter make our breadstuff, an' ain't got ne'ry bit ter spare; but mebby you'll find some at the next place." Thus we drove on for miles till our sympathies were quite aroused for the poor horses doing such faithful service, and in need of a good dinner as well as ourselves, for the cool air had given a keen edge to our appetites. Coming to a larger field where a quantity of corn was piled up in the front yard, our man jumped out of the hack, leaving the horses to our care, while he walked over to investigate, having no doubt that there he could get all the corn he needed. The owner of the coveted heap was a widow, who eyed him with no little suspicion as he advanced toward the house. Making known the object of his visit, he offered her fifty cents per bushel for her corn, that being the highest market price. "Humph!" she replied, removing a

snuff stick from her mouth with a jerk, "you needn't think you ken fool me in a corn bargin, fur I ken git that at the store over thar, an' it won't pay me ter let you have it fur what I ken sell it at the store." Failing to convince her that fifty cents was the highest price being paid anywhere for corn at that time, she wound up by saying "she didn't care ter sell."

Amused and disappointed, we drove on, but soon found all the grain we needed. In conversing with these people living so far back in the hollows and gorges, I learned that but few of them had ever seen a railroad, a typewriter, a telephone, or a bicycle, and that their knowledge of all the modern inventions now being used by man in the great busy world was surprisingly limited; yet I found it refreshing and interesting to talk with them about the wild animals and their habits, the mountain streams and the rocky peaks, the birds and the most popular trails,

the great cool springs and the wild flowers, all of which are abundant in these silent way-side places where so many of the people live.

The little corn mills, located along the mountain streams in almost every neighborhood—the capacity of which, in many cases, is about one bushel per day—were among the many curious things which we looked upon by day, and thought of by night. The men driving their little oxen with hickory bark traces, and the house wives sweeping their one room houses with a bundle of sedge grass tied with a string, gave me a new revelation of the genuine independence of some of our American cousins in the highlands.

Any student of natural history would find it well worth while to spend a few hours with one of these belated children of the forest, whose only occupation from childhood has been to study, and enjoy, and appropriate for his own personal use the things of Nature.

The first evening after leaving home, we were fortunate enough to find a very good house where we stayed all night, the family being exceptionally kind and thoughtful of our comfort. But at the close of the second day we were in a place where the outlook for a comfortable night's lodging was anything but promising.

It was growing dark when we drove up to the home of a very poor family, who lived in a flat, swampy place on the river; in an old mill house which had been converted into a dwelling of two rooms. The kitchen having no floor but the bare ground, and the other room used for sitting, dining, and bedroom, had no window. A heavy door made of rough boards, with a big chain hanging to it, was pushed to at night, and a chair set against it. After closing the door and fastening it in this fashion, our kind host looked at us with an assuring smile and said, as if to rid us of all disturbing doubts concerning

our safety—"A chair does just as good as a lock that 'ud cost fifteen or twenty cents; and we're not one bit afeard o' robbers in these parts; for they'd soon find out that there's mighty poor pick-in' around here."

Our hostess was a tall woman with a dignified bearing, and for an uneducated person used good English. She was warm, frank and hearty in extending to us the hospitality of her home; and for one who was compelled by circumstances to live in such sordid poverty we found her exceptionally tidy in her housekeeping. Her table was set with more taste than is generally displayed by the average woman in such communities; and the bed we slept in was quite clean and comfortable. As I studied her finely chiseled face; her firm, set mouth; her broad, smooth brow; large blue eyes, and thick, wavy, black hair, I concluded she was naturally a strong, well tempered woman, and if educated would have



stood equal with the brightest and best women of the land.

Going a little deeper into conversation, my interest in her was much intensified as she told me her maiden name was Ball, and claimed to be one of George Washington's descendants—a third cousin, I believe, to the Father of our Country. She became enthusiastic while discussing the subject at the tea table, as she was expecting to come into possession of some property in Washington, D. C., which, she said, rightly belonged to the Washington heirs.

I shall not soon forget her attitude or looks. How her sunburnt features would light up between the dips of snuff, of which she partook freely after finishing her meal!

Seating herself in a low chair by the fire, she began to unfold to me more fully her financial prospects.

“Now,” said she, “it comes to my mind that mebbly you are just the one

to advise me about my share o' the property; a cousin o' mine is now lookin' it up, to see what can be done. A hundred years ago George Washington leased a piece o' land to some parties in and about where the city o' Washington now stands. This lease was made for just ninety-nine years; and by this time the land would be so valuable, if we could succeed in gittin' it straightened out, it would be a sight o' help to us. The lease has now run out and it ought to go into the hands o' the heirs at once. As well as we've been able to reckon it up, my part would amount to about thirteen hundred dollars."

Thus she talked on, growing more and more confidential all the while. Perceiving my interest in her story of the antiquated Washington land lease, she ventured further, confiding to me her plans as to how she purposed to use the anticipated thirteen hundred dollars!



“First of all,” she continued, “I will buy a few acres of land, and build a house on it, with three rooms. Then I will buy a good cow, an’ horse; an’ this will give us a fine start, it all bein’ our own; and I think, as we are down here by the mill, I ken make some money keepin’ boarders at a dollar and a half a week; so then I ken take the rest o’ the money an’ send my two children to school. I never wanted anything so bad in my life as I wanted a education; but there wusn’t much chance fur me when I wus young; an’ I remember how I used to go out in the woods alone, when I wus a girl, an’ think it all over an’ wish, an’ wish, that I could get some learnin’ so as to be a Missionary; but it’s too late fur me now; but I want to do the best I ken by my children, so as they ken be of some use in the world.” The fire in the great fireplace, where the logs had blazed and crackled for several hours, at last burned low; and we retired to

rest for the night, the greater part of which I spent in turning over in my mind the events of the day, and the strange things which this kind woman had told me of herself, her relations, and her present hopeful outlook. Secretly, I entertained grave doubts about her hopes ever being realized; and finally fell asleep, a little while before the day dawned. Sleeping but a short time, I was suddenly aroused by the vigorous exercising of their favorite rooster, perched upon a pole in the chimney corner, just outside of the thin board partition which separated the bed room from the hennery. Flapping his wings energetically, he crowed at intervals, about five minutes at a time, until he had whiled away nearly a full half hour; flapping and crowing as a rooster would, located far away from civilization, entirely relieved of all exciting fears about being overthrown and demolished in a pit fight, suddenly consigned to the market box, or put

on exhibition for two whole weeks at a county fair.

Supremely happy in serving in the capacity of a family alarm clock, he made that weird, lonely, hollow ring, with his clear, shrill notes; and as the old man crawled slowly out of bed and began to stir up the fire he said: "When that rooster begins to flap his wings and crow in that fashion, I al'ays know it's time to be gittin' up."

Breakfast over, a very old Bible, covered with a brown, hair skin, was taken down from the shelf in the corner, and we were asked to have prayers with them.

Before leaving, our host gave us a kind invitation to stop with them in the future, if we should ever chance to pass that way, adding that "they would always be glad to see us; and though they were too poor to give us good accommodations, they would give us lots o' welcome if we would come again." Poor as they were, they refused to let

us remunerate them for their kindness; and with this very unusual hospitality, shown to us by perfect strangers, we were much impressed and pleased.

In one neighborhood through which we passed, stopping long enough to visit the district school, we found about thirty young mountaineers toiling up the hill of knowledge in a unique way; for while the citizens of that community had been prosperous enough to erect a log school house, they had not as yet been able to get it seated; so the young learners were seated on the floor in front of a big fireplace, presided over by a young lady teacher, timid and shy, and who did not seem to appreciate having her school put on exhibition in such an impromptu manner for us strangers. We relieved her embarrassment by making a brief call; but this scene reminded us of the early struggles of our good President Lincoln, who did his first ciphering in the loft of a log cabin in Kentucky, using a wooden

shovel for a slate, and a piece of keel, which he picked up by the brook, for a pencil.

We had hoped to reach home by the close of the fourth day; but as the shades of evening began to gather about us we learned that we were nearly fifteen miles from our abiding place, which meant that we would either have to put up for another night in one of the very poorest of log cabins or drive three hours after dark, down a steep mountain, where the road was very narrow in places. But after comparing our own beds with the accommodations that we were likely to receive in that locality, we decided to brave the darkness and chill of the night and take the chances on being thrown out of the wagon into some deep ravine a hundred feet below, rather than put up in one of those crude homes, where, for reasons too numerous to mention, we could not hope to get even one hour's rest. After jogging along for about an hour,

we were much relieved by seeing the moon rise like a great ball of fire over the way, though it was some time before we derived much benefit from her light, as the forest was so dense the moon beams could not shine through sufficiently to light up our road until she took a more lofty seat in the sky and began to send forth her welcome rays directly over our heads.

The end of our journey we reached in safety, but our bodies were so tired, our feet so cold, and our stomachs so empty, we could not help feeling that we had paid pretty dear for all the pleasure we got out of the trip, and fully enjoyed the luxury of our own home and beds for the rest of the night, though our home was only a small cottage where we slept on straw beds, with no springs, and warmed ourselves by the open fireplace; but it was our home, and that made all the difference.

## CHAPTER II

## OPENING A MISSION

'Twas a bright morning in the early spring when, on getting off the train at a little country railroad station, I walked up to the front of a dingy, rickety old summer boarding house, where a tall, half-witted fellow was sitting idly on the piazza, whittling a stick and humming a silly love tune. Rising, he called the lady of the house, who stared at me in silence for a second, then invited me to come in, seating me in a large, barny looking room, with a bare floor which had long remained unmolested by soap and water. Being a curious person, and naturally suspicious and distrustful of strangers, she at once proceeded to put me through a long role of catechising as to my name, occupation, whether I was



married or single, and the religious denomination to which I belonged.

I answered all of her pointed questions, without seeming to notice the abruptness of her manner, for it was quite evident that she (Mrs. Grundy) felt herself a little above the average mountain woman in that vicinity, but failed to conceal the fact that she was more lacking in education and good manners than in self-esteem.

After learning it was my intention to open a mission somewhere in the mountains, she at once gave me a brief history of almost every family in the neighborhood, describing to me in word pictures the dark record of a number of individuals, whom she thought might be reached and saved, if the proper course was taken and the right influence thrown around them.

But later it was revealed that Mrs. Grundy's enthusiasm had not reached such heights in so short a time because of her desire to see her neighbors



helped, but a happy thought came to her which she believed would work out for her own personal interests. "For," said she to a friend, "if a mission is opened here and they get deeply interested, they'll be sure to buy land and make it permanent, and if I encourage them they'll probably purchase some lots of us, and that would give us a chance to pay off our mortgage and get on our feet again."

One day the startling announcement was made in the village of ——— that the only empty house in the place had been rented by some missionary women who were going to open a day school and Sunday school, visit all the people, and hold religious meetings. Following this unexpected announcement, there was much gossiping among the villagers, and such questions as "What does it all mean? What do you suppose they're goin' ter teach? How did they happen ter come here, and what do yer suppose they're paid fur doin' sich

work?" floated rife among them. "Well," said old Jimmy Lynn, "if them missionaries ain't Roman Catholics, then I've missed my guess." "Catholics?" said Samuel Day. "Not much Catholics about them. If you ever hear that little one pray and read the Bible as she did in my house tother day, you'd never say Catholic ag'in, you shore wouldn't." "Now, looky here," said Lynn, "I'm not easy fooled an' tuk in, I tell yer I ain't. I've heard that Catholics have schools an' women al'ays teach their schools, an' if them women don't turn out ter be Catholics, then I'll say ag'in that old Jim's missed his guess."

"Say, 'Squire," said Aunty Brown, as she stood in the door of her cabin home, "have you heard the good news about them Missionary women a-comin' here? I b'lieve that wonderful things are a-goin' ter happen right here in this 'ere very settlement afore long. I do

hope when they hold meetin's they'll git a holt o' my boy."

"Well, I don't know jist what ter think, Aunty Brown," said 'Squire Junkey. "Hit seems sorter strange that they'd come here, and some say that they're jist goin' ter preach an' carry on dreadful, an' I'll tell yer right now, Aunty Brown, I don't b'lieve that any woman livin' ken preach, an' if they come here an' git up on the platform fur ter blab, then I b'lieve they are men dressed up in women's clothes. An' we'd better all watch 'em mighty close ter see if they're any good or not, an' time'll tell. Barney Smith, I'm glad you've come, fur I've been a-want-in' ter ask you if you're a-goin' ter send yer children ter the new mission school. Some have been a-askin' me if you'd been drawn in with 'em."

"No, 'Squire, I jist tell yer how it is with me. One of 'em called at our house t' other day an' my children tuk ter her powerful, an' she talked mighty

fair, too, I tell yer. But I don't like ter send my young'uns till I find out jist what they're goin' ter teach. Now, some say that they are a-goin' ter teach ever'thing, an' then ag'in some say they ain't goin' ter teach nothin' but the Bible, an' there's one thing sart'in—I can't buy Bibles fur all o' my chaps now, unless I knowed jist how the baccar crap wus a-goin' ter turn out, so I'll jist wait a spell an' see how things go, an' if I find out fur sure that they're all right, then I'll send all o' mine as soon as I ken git 'em ready."

"Well, you'd better look out an' be mighty keerful an' be sure they're all right before sendin' to 'em, that's my advice," said Junkey.

Little Miss Bright set out to visit a neighborhood lying back of the village, where lived a number of large families in a lonely gorge. Walking up to the door of a small but exceptionally clean cabin home, where an old lady sat on the doorstep knitting, while her three

grandchildren played in the yard—approaching her with a friendly smile, she offered to shake hands. Seeing the old lady's reluctance to reciprocate her friendly greeting, she explained to her that she was one of the missionary teachers who was out visiting among the people. On hearing this bit of information, her attitude and looks suddenly changed. Bounding to her feet, her face, which bore marks of intelligence and natural refinement, beamed with pleasure. Stepping forward, she placed a hand on each of Miss Bright's shoulders and as quick as a flash implanted a kiss on her cheek, exclaiming, "I've hearn about yer, an' yer raly be one o' them? Come in, honey! Come in! I jist hope the day'll soon come when the good Lord'll flood this country with jist sich good women as you be. There's three children fur yer school," she continued, pointing to the children who had now gathered about the door. "I never had any hope of 'em

ever gittin' any larnin'. The oldest is now agoin' on twelve years old, an' never seed inside of a school house in her life, an' never will unless you good women take her in, now that you've come among us ter do good."

After stopping long enough to get acquainted with the children, who promised to come to school the following Monday, Miss Bright took her leave, receiving the old lady's warmest benedictions; who urged her to call again, "And be shore to come stay all day and take dinner." The following week the grandfather came trudging over the hills leading the little children by the hand. At the door of the mission school he committed them to the care of Miss Bright, remarking, "He felt shore she could make 'em larn if anybody could."

A few days later Miss Bright and I called at the home of Jimmy Lynn, finding him sitting under a tree smoking his pipe. Seeing us he hastily rose to



his feet, jerking his pipe nervously from his mouth, and stared as if he intended to try to escape without speaking; then suddenly changing his mind, he turned and, leaning heavily on his cane, met us in a quiet, heroic manner.

“I suppose this is Mr. Lynn,” said I. “We are glad to meet you, for we are strangers in this part of the country, and we are told that you are one of the oldest settlers here, so we thought we would like to advise with you concerning our work; besides Miss Bright here is a member of your own denomination and she thought she would like to meet you on that account—‘birds of a feather will flock together, you know.’ ”

When old Jimmy joined the church of his choice—the anti-Mission Baptist—long years before he made up his mind that in all places and under all circumstances he would stand by the members of his own denomination. What to do now he is at a loss to know. He has not yet recovered from his first

suspicious that we were Catholics, and he still has a nervous dread of "bein' fooled and tuk in," as he expressed it. Then, too, everybody was talking freely about "Them missionary women" and there are a thousand rumors afloat about this new mission, and he, with the rest, had already announced his opinion. In his heart he wants to do right, and our open, friendly way pleased him and caused him to feel that he could trust us. Understanding the situation, we talked a while about things in general, then telling him to what particular branch of the organized church I claimed membership, I said: "You see, Mr. Lynn, while we belong to different denominations, there is nothing so beautiful as to see Christians all working together to make the country better and to bring souls to Christ."

Then opening my Testament I read a few verses about "having love one for another" and "all belonging to one body in Christ," etc. We then sang a



verse of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and prayed that Mr. Lynn might be strengthened and that his wayward boys might be reached and saved. When we rose the tears were streaming down the old man's face and he shook hands warmly, asking us to call again.

On his way to the post office that evening he met Samuel Day and with a high head and a look suggestive of determination, he said: "Day, what you said about them missionary women is alright; and I've made up my mind that other people can do as they please, but I'm goin' ter stand by 'em through thick an' thin." "I thought you'd be took in," said Day, "if you had a chance to hear 'em pray. I do hope they'll stir up this whole settlement a'fore long; goodness knows we're a needin' it bad enough; we shore do!"

In a dilapidated old church building which was offered us for our work, our first public meeting was held on Sunday

evening. The posting of bills and writing of newspaper notices was unnecessary to get the announcement circulated, for the news spread like a wild prairie fire on a windy day, which, when well started, nothing could stop.

The people came in crowds and filled the house at an early hour. Many riding on horse back, some behind ox teams, while others trudged through the mud, carrying little children in their arms. Some came to hear the truth, and many came out of sheer curiosity, to hear and to see "Them missionary women," whose presence in the community had excited so much wonder and comment.

Aunty Brown came early so as to get a front seat. Samuel Day took his place near the platform and joined in singing the first hymn as if the sweet strains of music from a heavenly choir had reached his ear, bringing his good, receptive soul into close touch with all

the redeemed and blood-washed singers of the glory land.

Jimmie Lynn raised his trembling voice in the first prayer service and gave thanks to God for sending the missionary children among them to teach them how to live right.

The first meeting was one of great power, and the second night the house would not hold the people. When the invitation was given to the unconverted, Barney Smith and four of his companions rose for prayer, while Squire Junkey and a number of his friends looked on critically from the rear of the church.

Thus the work increased in interest every night, till nearly one hundred had sought and found Christ. Among the number was Jimmie Lynn's two boys, Aunty Brown's only son, and Samuel Day's three grown girls. The enthusiasm was high and a blessed tidal wave of salvation swept everything before it for weeks and months to come.

## CHAPTER III

## A DISTURBING ELEMENT

A minister, living in the community, preached near the village once a month who could read but very little and could not write his name.

He quarreled with his congregation during the week and hurled sarcasm in their faces on Sunday. He pounded the Bible with his fists and made a spittoon of the inside of the pulpit, as he rarely ever addressed his audience without a quid of tobacco in his mouth—a part of his own crop. He supported himself and family by working in a tobacco field during the week and acting as the spiritual instructor of the people on Sundays, receiving for his ecclesiastical services about ten dollars per year.

Becoming jealous of this new mission

attracting so much attention he held a conference with his members and decided to canvass the district and warn all the people against the missionaries and their work. Applying himself diligently to his task, he worked with all his might, believing he could put an end to this new craze in a short time.

On hearing one of the missionaries, who was a college graduate, give an address, at the close of the service he remarked to a friend: "I thank God that the skirts o' my coat never breshed agin' e'ry college wall; what I give out to you people is no fix up o' mine, it's God's Holy Writ."

'Twas a dark, gloomy day in midsummer when he (Rev. Umbry) saddled his little one-eyed mule, replenished his hip pocket with a fresh twist of tobacco, lit his cob pipe, mounted and rode away on what he considered a very important round of duties, namely, the speedy extinction of all missionary influence in that whole re-

gion. Feeling sure of success, he moved forward in his work with far more confidence than most ministers who take up their duties as pastor after graduating with honors from some high grade theological school. His prominence as a leader he greatly enjoyed, and chuckled at the thought of the way the people would honor and reverence him after their eyes were opened and he had succeeded in driving error out of their land.

The first person he met after setting out on his round was old Joe Grimes, who had been one of the worst drunken sots in that part of the country, but several months before was converted in the mission.

Approaching him in a confidential way he began to pour out his objections to the missionaries and their work and asked Joe if he didn't think it would be better for him and for the whole settlement to stand by the old teaching and the old ways, instead of running round

after new things. Drawing himself up and looking at him in a way that would impress one that he at least felt equal to any attack his would-be spiritual adviser might make, and mopping his face with an old tattered bandanna handkerchief, Joe said: "I know what's the matter with you: you're a gittin' skeered fur fear that them missionary women will tell you somethin' you don't know. You needn't came a fishin' round here fur missionary horns ter blow in yer church, fur I'm a mission man to my heart's core. Nobody knows better an' I what kind of a pit they dug me out of. Their kind o' preachin', a tellin' of the love o' God ter save a poor sinner, is good enough fur me. I aint got no use fur your old scare religion: a talkin' about them that's dead, and the graveyards that's awaitin' fur us all. Hit never did me nor no one else in this settlement any good as I know about, and others will tell you the same, or Joe's missed it worse'en he ever



missed it when he drunk whiskey till he didn't have nery bit o' sense, that's all I have ter say."

Seeing his argument had availed nothing in this case, he rode on to the house of Mary Ann Jenkins, who had stood aloof at first and for some time after others had put their children in school and were sounding the praises of "Them missionary women," she said but little, and quietly kept her children home. Being a strong, true character, she believed in first looking into a thing before making up her mind as to whether it was right or not, and when her mind was made up "then stickin' to it," as she expressed it.

For several weeks Mary Ann's mind had been made up that the mission was just what she and her family needed, and had already declared that it was her intention to make missionaries out of her two youngest daughters and a school teacher out of the oldest, if, said she, "the missionaries stay among us so



as to give 'em the proper trainin'. Umbry, being well acquainted with Mary Ann's disposition and her strong liking for what she thought would be lasting and enduring and not vanish and burst like a soap bubble as soon as she began to praise and admire it, attempted to discourage her by saying, "the mission work looked all right to her now, but from some things he'd found out lately he was sure it would soon be a thing of the past, fur the missionaries were just here long enough to gather up some o' their nickles and would soon go away ter leave all the people in the lurch who had been a runnin' after them, liking their work to one of the mountain freshets when the water would run high for a time, then suddenly go down, leaving nothing but little stagnant pools here and there."

She listened quietly until he had finished, then tossing her knitting across the foot of the wooden bedstead and adjusting herself in her stiff-backed,

split-bottomed chair and locking her hands tightly in front of her, she drew a long breath and said: "You may think that Mary Ann Jenkins don't know what she's about, but some day you'll find out that her head is a long sight leveler than yourn. I never had any chance to git an education, but I want my children to be something, and to stand in with the best of 'em, and I'm mighty particular whose hands they fall into, and I didn't put nery child I've got into that day school, nor Sunday school neither, till I first went there myself an' hearn 'em teachin' the right thing. Then, said I to myself, now, Mary Ann Jenkins, this is your chance in a hull lifetime, and you'd better put all o' yourn in as soon as you can git 'em there. And as shore as I live every one of 'em can read an write an figger a-ready, and repeat more Bible then I ever heard you repeat, or any other preacher that ever come to these parts. So I'll give you and everybody else ter

understand that while the water is high Mary Ann Jenkins an' her gang are a goin' ter wade in an' stay in as long as there's enough left ter wet the soles o' our feet; an' as fur my old man, he's jist got in so deep he's got washed cleaner thin I ever expected to see 'im in this world, an' it wasn't through goin' ter your church, an' hearin' you preach that he's been made more fittin' to live with, either. So now that you know my mind about it, enough's been said on the subject."

➤ Eliza Grimes, Joe's wife, was very generous, though poor, and she sometimes showed her appreciation by sending little gifts to the mission, such as vegetables, squashes, pumpkins, etc., her pumpkin crop this year being fine. As she gathered them in November she laid aside some of the largest and best, saying "she was going to send them to the mission just before Christmas."

Umbrey's salary was due in this month, so one of his deacons asked

Eliza if she didn't think it her duty to give him something, although she did not belong to his church. Giving her head a little toss and turning on her heel with an air of great superiority, she said: "I git the best gospel I ever heard right over there," pointing to the mission house, "and I'm agoin' ter pay them missionaries well, too, if I do have to pay 'em in pumpkins. So you needn't come to me to help out with Umbrey's salary, for I'm not supportin' preachers as can't tell me things I don't know.

Becoming weary and tired with his fruitless endeavors to turn the minds of the people or to break up our work, Rev. Umbrey at last decided that the best policy for him was to be more friendly with us. So occasionally he dropped into our meetings, never failing to take part in the open testimony service.

We had now enrolled just half a hundred pupils in our day school, and a

congregation of three hundred people attended the other services.

Being crowded to the utmost, all of our work was carried on in rooms too small for comfort. With the encouragement and help of northern friends I decided to erect buildings suitable for our work.

Jimmie Lynn offered to donate a lot, much to Mrs. Grundy's disappointment, who was watching every movement of the missionaries.

One day she came to me and said "she wished to have a talk in interest of the work we were doing," asking me if I didn't need about twenty-five acres of land, informing me that she had a piece she would sell very reasonable if the purchase could be made right away through some good northern society, whom she knew I would be capable of interesting in such a scheme. But her price being far from satisfactory, I failed to act upon her proposition.

Jimmie Lynn's lot not being rightly located, I purchased lots from other parties and commenced the work of building. But this sudden blasting of all of Mrs. Grundy's hopes to get personal gain out of our mission enterprise and a certain quiet dignity exhibited on several occasions by our lady teachers who could not afford to let her control and manage the school work, which she boldly attempted to do a number of times, greatly stirred her carnal nature.

Taking a bold stand against us, she made a public speech or two in small Sunday schools and in day schools. Ridiculing our work and workers, all of whom had come from the North; filling the air for miles around with her poisonous hissings against the "Yankee workers," as she called us, "coming from the North to the beautiful Southland, putting the Southern people on missionary ground, instead of going to China or Japan or to some other country where such work was needed."

Her third class boarding house kept open during the summer, was a little market place for many of the poorer people who could not afford teams to drive to the nearest city with their little surplus of produce. So she flatly told her poor customers that she would no longer buy from persons who in any way patronized the mission. But the people appreciated the food they were receiving for mind and soul more than food for their bodies, and in spite of every pressure brought to bear upon them, they were true.

There was a little Sunday school near by in which she worked which we had in every possible way tried to help, and when a new child would come into this school she would tell them they could not be taught there unless they would promise never to go to the mission school. But even the little children noticed the difference between the spirit of love and the spirit of evil, and they not only remarked about it among



themselves, but flocked to the mission in large numbers after listening to her unholy exhortations to keep away.

The following conversation, which took place between one of Mr. Grundy's sympathizers and a member of my large Bible class, not only showed how the work was appreciated by hundreds who were helped by the teaching which they received, but it also showed the power of a good and Christ-like example among those who were ignorant and prejudiced against us.

One day Squire Junkey sat down beside a path leading up to the mission to have a talk with little Jeff Mooney, who was a member of my Bible class. Among other things he said: "Well, Jeff, I've jist stood off and talked agin that mission work 'til I'm ashamed. I've done it more'n a little, but I've set out to turn over a new leaf, for I'm jist beginnin' to git my eyes open about the whole thing since old Mrs. Grundy's been tearin' around like a mad cat, and



no matter what she says or does, them missionary women jist go right on in their straightforward way a tellin' o' the love o' God and a lookin' after the poor little children and a teachin' them good things, and never say one word agin anybody. They are the most independent women I ever seed in all my life, and sometimes when that one that seems to stand at the head o' things starts out to do somethin', when she ain't got hardly anythin' to do it with, she jist moves right ahead and seems jist as happy as she can be all the time. Now I never seed that kind o' religion practiced in these parts before, and I believe it's the right kind, and it's just what this settlement needs. I'm agit-tin' mighty tired of all this fussin' and fightin' and from this time on you can call me a mission man."

"Well, I'm mighty glad you've come in," said Jeff; "lots o' people are be-ginnin' to see it the same way. Think of old Mrs. Grundy findin' fault with

the North fer sendin' missionaries to a place like this, where she and some others act worse than the heathen in China, an' Japan. I wish they'd send a hundred more like the ones they have sent. I'd help to rig up wagons to haul 'em."

## CHAPTER IV

## MRS. GRUNDY FINDS MORE FAULT

Our mission people, though all poor, were divided into two distinct classes. One class, being proud and self-respecting, made an honest effort to help themselves, appreciating aid and instruction, but never soliciting charity; showing a disposition to work for all favors received and would suffer rather than place themselves on a level with beggars and paupers.

The other class was lazy and shiftless, and would not work except from dire necessity, spending their time round in conspicuous places whittling with a jack knife, smoking tobacco, dipping snuff and feeding upon the latest gossip with no higher ambition than to cheat as many people as possible in their little deals and to draw on the sympathies of

the missionaries for practical assistance; caring not how they got along, just so they could in some way get along without work. Comparatively few of this latter class was numbered among the patrons of our mission. However, Peter Hans was. His children were in the Sunday school and he attended all the other services. By calling at the mission almost every week, soliciting clothes for himself and family, he made himself very obtrusive, not willing to be refused. He had received substantial aid from our second-hand clothes room, which the missionary societies replenished from time to time with their helpful barrels, ere we learned that he was shiftless and unworthy. Though he faithfully promised to work for all we gave him, we never succeeded in getting him to do the smallest job around the mission, no matter how much we needed him.

Our rule for the disposition of second hand clothing was to set a nominal

price on the goods, giving all a chance to do something for it in the way of giving a little labor or produce in exchange, as we wished to elevate rather than pauperize the needy. On asking Hans to do some work in advance for clothing, he refused and was much offended. Mrs. Grundy, being the only person to whom Hans could go to for sympathy, he confided his grievances to her, who so far had failed in all her malicious efforts to destroy the influence of our work. Now she decided to try again, making the most of this new circumstance to get the people out of confidence with their leaders. After talking with Hans she felt confident that she at last held the key to success, and without delay took up the question of the distribution of clothing among the poor, telling them that the clothing which they had to buy was sent there to be given to them outright, and that we were not only imposing on them by

making them pay for it, but were imposing on the societies that sent it.

Mary Ann Jenkins was noted for her business tact. If there was anything she liked better than to be highly respected and to have her own way, it was a chance to take advantage of what she considered a real bargain. She worked hard, and, having a large family whom she was anxious to educate, and her six children always prominent in the public school exercises, Easter and Christmas entertainments, she had occasion to call at the clothes room quite often, so as to "fit 'em out," as she said. Donning her best dress—a neat black serge—she drove into the city with a mule team to see a wealthy friend on business whom she had known all her life. Her friend, taking this opportunity to ask some questions about the mission, said: "Mary, Mrs. Grundy was telling me the other day that the missionaries in your village are making gain of you poor people, selling you old

worn-out clothing and making you pay three prices for it, and I think it a shame if you are being imposed upon in that way." Mary Ann had always considered the dress she had on a most remarkable bargain, and made it a point to answer all questions concerning the mission by first telling her own experience, emphasizing all the facts about the benefits she had received, and then close by giving her "honest opinion," with a bit of prophecy thrown in. In answer to these questions she said, "I don't know how others trade, nor what they git, but now that you've knowed me all my life, I want ter ask you if you ever seed me wear a better dress thin the one I've got on ter day? I got it at the mission over a year ago for three heds o' cabbage, and if that's what Mrs. Grundy calls "three prices fur things," then it'll be a bright day fur some o' us poor people when everything is sold fur three prices."

Rising, she stepped in front of the

large bay window, catching up her skirt and spreading it out the full length of her arms on each side, so as to let the light shine full upon it, thus giving her friend a chance to see for herself the true value of the garment she prized so highly, she continued: "I never wore anything but a cotton frock in all my life till I got somethin' better from them missionary women, an' I'm agoin' on fifty years old, an' there's another woman down in our neighborhood still poorer than I be—an' goodness knows I find it hard enough scrapin' ter git a little somethin' ter eat an' wear—an' she told me tother day, an's been a tellin' others, too, about the good help she gits at the mission, an' she has seven children, by jist sendin' the missionaries a quart o' milk a day. She says that she's about clothed all o' them an' herself, too, fur about two years now, an' she 'lowed it wus a sight o' help, too; an' said they didn't have ter shiver round with the cold all



winter as they did afore them women come ter help us out. An' it's my opinion if Mrs. Grundy had a gone ter a mission school like the one that my children's in she'd a learned so many good things an' a got ter be so perlite ter people that she'd be o'shamed ter keep runnin' round the country a talk-in' about her betters. For if any one wants ter see real ladies, they can see 'em at the mission home any day, an' mighty smart ones at that. I can remember mighty well when she used ter live in her log cabin an' wear her cheap cotton frocks, an' work in the terbaccer field like the rest of us—that didn't have any chance in the world. But after her old dad nearly killed hisself a drinkin' an' was so mean that nobody keered fur 'im, an' he had ter die in the poor house, then a preacher tuk pity on her an' sent her ter school fur a while, an' since she got a little education an' has married an' old man with a war title ter his name an' moved out o' her

log cabin inter a hotel, she's been a thinkin' ever since that she knows enough ter run this hul country; but the most of us are in favor of some one o' runnin' it as knows how, an' that's why we stand by them missionary women; we b'lieve that they know how ter run this country better than anyone that has ever run it before, so as fur me an' mine, we'll be our own judge o' the cloth we git at the mission."

Not willing to be thwarted and to have her advice entirely ignored by her poorer neighbors, Mrs. Grundy tries another plan to retard the progress of our work. The missionary societies having been successful in procuring special freight rates on the goods sent to us, she writes certain railroad officials telling them the same story she had been telling nearer home, using her "war title" to show her good standing, referring them to a certain Northern minister whom she said would verify the truth of her statement. Not know-

ing anything about the facts in the case, the railroad men who had been very kind to us were confused for a short time. But the matter was so taken up by persons of influence and standing that the railroad companies were satisfied with their explanations and all was well. The minister in question once sought an opening with his wife to work in connection with our mission. He being disconnected and out of harmony with his own church and connected with a society not altogether orthodox, I moved cautiously in the matter of giving him a place in our ranks. As he was a good talker and well educated, I decided to try him for a few weeks, he being willing to come at his own expense. His career during the three weeks he was with us I would not like to record here; it is enough to say that he almost succeeded in that brief time in breaking up our mission. His influence was so hurtful the result was confusion among the workers, confusion

among the converts and confusion in the community at large. At the end of the three weeks I dismissed him from the field, gathered up the fragments of a torn up work and moved on as before.

Concerning titles, there are many county and state officials bearing titles which would suggest good education, popularity and high social standing, and which would mean much in more enlightened places, or in a country not so far in the rear of the times. But when these same titles are borne by men who have been born and raised in such districts as I have described they dwindle down into a ridiculous absurdity.

I was once driven a long distance over the mountain to a little town which was a county seat to see a certain county official on a matter of business pertaining to the religious enterprise in which I was engaged. On entering a room which had long been used by public men filling important offices, thoroughly

varnished with grease, tobacco juice and ashes, I was introduced to a man who could not speak a sentence of good English and to my great surprise he was the man I had come to see.

Six months had passed away since Hans got offended at the door of our clothes room. His smaller children were still in school, but Mary, the oldest, he kept hard at work in the field and garden, while he loafed about the depot and other public places, talking about how he thought mission work ought to be carried on.

'Twas a cool, frosty morning in the early autumn. The teachers were busy in the school room, while I sat alone writing letters which I wished to get off on the next train. Hearing a light tap at my door I answered it, when before me stood a little girl with a slight form, pale face, large brown eyes, blue lips, and a downcast look; clad in a faded, threadbare calico dress which had once been in our clothes room; bare

footed, wearing a torn and tattered sun-bonnet on her head. She timidly said she was in need of clothing and asked if I had any work that she could do to earn some. It was little Mary Hans, just twelve years of age. My heart went out to her, speaking as she did in her frank, humble way. Telling her I would try to find something she could do, with a grateful look and with tears glistening in her eyes, she said, with more courage than she had at first spoken: "I think you are very kind to me, and I hope I can do a lot for you. I know Pa aint done right, an' I feel mighty sorry about the way he has acted, but I can do right, and I'll keep my word and do my best ter help yer all I can." She did do her best, and became a great blessing to us in running errands and performing many little duties about the home. After supplying her with a number of suits, among which was a nice fitting blue serge with blouse waist, sailor collar and white braid trimmings,

good stockings and neatly buttoned shoes; nice ribbon bows for her thick black hair, taking the place of white cotton strings and a pretty sailor hat pinned gracefully on her head taking the place of the disfigured sunbonnet, her looks were greatly improved. With the consent of her parents I kept her in the mission home all winter, she helping about the home after school hours.

Greatly resenting Mrs. Grundy's unholy attacks on the mission, she made the most of every opportunity to talk with her son (Ben Grundy) about her mission blessings. Later she was converted, an account of which will be given in another chapter.



## CHAPTER V

## WORKING OUT FROM HEADQUARTERS

Rumors had gone out into other districts about what was being done in the village. One day I received a letter from Coons Creek, some twenty-five miles from the railroad, which contained the following invitation for us to come there and hold meetings:

“Miss ——, August the seventh day. We the people o’ Coons Creek have jist decided that you’uns are wanted in this ’ere settlement to hold meetin’s in our school house, as we’ve been a hearin’ a lot about the mighty sight o’ good you’uns are a doin’ in that part o’ the country; and we’re a feelin’ powerful anxious about gittin’ things sorter stirred up here and the people started on the right track in this part o’ the country, as we’uns don’t have nothin’ at

Coons Creek. Now if you can come and fetch your helpers, we the people o' Coons Creek will be sure to give you all a mighty warm welcome. Signed by reliable and law-abidin' citizens. Peter Blake, Squire Dick, Postmaster Crow, Doc Curly, Deputy Sherif Hank."

In company with three other missionaries I went. Taking with us a camping outfit, we made the journey in a lumber wagon with two little mules, driven by a mission convert. Reaching there just in time to hear the first weird notes of the night songsters—the katydids in the apple trees, the whippoorwills in the laurel bushes, and the hoarse hooting of the owl perched on the edge of a craggy cliff. Driving inside of the high rail fence, we unloaded our chattels in the door yard of Squire Dick's cabin with a feeling that we ought to write a letter home at once—addressed United States of America.

It being too late to set up the tent that night, as we had forgotten to bring our

tent poles along—the only chance to sleep indoors was to accept the hospitality of Squire Dick's cabin, which consisted of one room. Us missionaries were duly assigned one bed in a remote corner. A few days later one of our party, whose home was in a Michigan city, wrote a letter to her mother in which she gave a graphic account of the situation and trials of the night, a part of which I quote: "Dear Mother, I never spent such a horrible night in my life. We had traveled all day. Had had no chance to get cooled off. We got in too late to have the use of our tent. Had to sleep in a log cabin over night. There were eleven in the room, and four of us in one forty-pound feather bed with roaches and other insects lively. A big fire place with a roaring fire in the middle of August, and the night exceptionally warm. Doors closed tight, and no windows. My heart sank within me when I saw them latched for the night. Dearest mother, believe me, I

never expect to be so warm and miserable again and live to tell you about it. I assure you we all got up early next morning."

The next day the men went to the woods and cut poles for our tent, and by noon it was up. As few people in that community had ever seen one before, it proved a good advertisement for our meetings. All day long teamsters, equestrians and pedestrians stopped for a short time as they chanced to pass that way to look at our little cloth tabernacle with its red scalloped trimmings.

The meetings in the log school house were well attended. Soon after the opening of our work, at the close of one of the services, a woman rushed to the front to speak with me. Her head dress was a man's old felt hat with a majority of the rim chopped off on one side. She wore a short calico dress, considerably hitched up in front, running to an ungainly point in the back, and deplorably separated from the waist at the band.

Her shoes, which were coarse and covered with mud, were buttoned on the wrong side of her feet with about two buttons near the neighborhood of her toes. Manifesting considerable emotion and great concern she said, "I wish my old man was here to go to yer meetin's! O! I do wish he was here this very minute, fur I shore feel that they'd do 'im a sight o' good!" "Where is he?" I asked. "Well, that's more'n I can tell; you see we'uns are a havin' a lot o' trouble in this 'ere settlement off an' on, an' two weeks ago my old man had to git up an git cause the revenues got after 'im fur makin' whiskey. I'd been tellin' them that he'd better let sich business alone. If they ketch 'em that'll mean a sight o' trouble fer me. But he wouldn't listen. And there's a lot o' fellers down here that have ter spend about half o' their time runnin' from them officers, fer they're a huntin' 'em down like rabibts most o' the time."

As we got farther into this work and better acquainted with the people and their needs, we learned that about two-thirds of the men in this locality was in some way connected with illicit distilling.

A little two-months school was taught every year in the school house where we held meetings, and the only preaching the people had listened to there in seven years was by a man that could neither read nor write. We announced a children's meeting, and when the time came to open this service the children filled the house, and the grown people filled the yard. The little ones came carrying old blue-backed spelling books, thinking they would need them in the meeting. We taught them to sing and to repeat Scripture texts. We told them the story of the cross, and explained to them the need of Sunday schools, and the kind of teaching they would receive if they had the right kind of teachers. "Well," said one woman, "this jist beats any-

thing we've ever had on Coons Creek!" After working this point for over a month with good results, we moved up the creek about three miles, where the people were not so poor, but where the smoke of the still houses was much thicker.

A presiding elder of the Methodist church, who encouraged me to take my assistants and go into this district, told me that just prior to our conversation about this place he preached to over a dozen murderers in jail, all of whom came from this neighborhood. No religious service had been held there for nearly four years. The people received us kindly, entertaining us in their homes, and announcing our meetings in the day school and from house to house. Here we found a large public building used for a five months district school and Masonic meetings. Also used in the past by many rambling Christian workers without learning or influence. A number of rough benches, a large



stove, warped, lopsided and rusty, with a pen built around it about six feet square and seven inches deep, full to the brim with ashes, and one little lamp without a chimney composed the furniture of this house. The pen around the stove was designed for a public spittoon where men, women and children deposited untold quantities of tobacco juice in every public gathering. This spittoon was built with much care and was looked upon by all as being of far more importance than lamps or stove polish.

In our first public meeting all the light we had in that big, dingy chapel was supplied by the one little lamp, without a chimney still, and one old lantern with an abundance of dirt on the outside and but little oil on the inside. Here we found out what all intelligent missionaries find out when they go into isolated pioneer fields. That the first thing to be done is to "prepare the way of the Lord" by getting a

place ready for His worship. So before beginning our work in a regular way we had a broom, soap, water, stove polish, dust rags and a good supply of physical strength applied to the inside of the building. This being done, we hung up a number of Scripture mottoes on the walls and new lamps well filled with lighting matter. On the table, made out of some stray boards, we put a neat table cover, and last of all a beautiful bouquet of fall flowers was placed on the stand and a little organ set in. The people, recovering from their first paralyzing stroke of astonishment, became good listeners to all we had to say, encouraging us by their presence and their words, and seemed anxious to help the work.

The matter of finding a home for ourselves was the most perplexing question of all. At first we used an old discarded log school house standing beside the other building, entirely open underneath, the logs resting on four piles of

stones built up at each corner about four feet from the ground. A great convenience for a herd of sheep, seeking protection from the heat of the sun during the day, giving place to more than a dozen hogs that had chosen this same spot for their resting place at night, making known to us by their hideous squeals and loud, hostile grunts how much they protested against this unexpected intrusion and how unwilling they were to surrender their rights to a few lone missionaries compelled by circumstances to take refuge in a house utterly abandoned by human beings.

Later the people offered us a half-finished house which was built for a good dwelling, but then being used for a tobacco barn. This house we accepted. The tobacco was moved out and the missionaries moved in. The floors were washed and the walls were white-washed. A number of goods boxes, draped with speckled calico, we used for a wash stand, dresser and kitchen table.

A straw mattress, a wooden bedstead, a few split bottomed chairs, a small table and a smokey little oil stove—the only chance for cooking a meal—composed our housekeeping outfit. On the walls which the whitewash so wonderfully transformed, we hung a few pictures taken from a Sunday school wall role sent to us by a city friend. In this way we began to fight the King's battle in a place where a Sunday school and Christian church was not yet in existence. A lively Sunday school was soon worked up, and from two to three Gospel meetings held every week, with almost no opposition. The workers were much encouraged with the results of their efforts, and the outlook for a strong, permanent work was promising, when all at once the attendance at these public meetings became very small. It was a sudden, rather than a gradual falling away. We were perplexed and did not understand the situation. We were sure that some false rumor was afloat

concerning ourselves, for when we met the people who took hold well at first and who seemed to be delighted with the work from the beginning, they would now shy off, giving us a distrustful and cross-eyed look.

7 On attempting to unravel the mystery our investigation proved that the difficulty had originated in this way: A number of persons living in the neighborhood who could read but very little, had told others that it was recorded in history that Uncle Sam owed England a debt. They had doubtless gotten the thought of what England could do and might do sooner or later much exaggerated in their minds. And as they talked things over among themselves, they were filled with fear and dread lest "them fur'en people," as they called the English, might swoop down upon them at some unexpected time and rob them of all their earthly possessions, especially the land now owned by the poorer citizens of the United States.

And it was through a conversation which took place between the suspicious persons which greatly cut down our numbers at the mission.

Ed Scout who owned more land in that region than anyone else, called a number of land holders together. Exhibiting some agitation he gave them his candid opinion about the missionaries. Said he, "There's somethin' on my mind that I b'lieve you'uns all ought ter know. I've been a dreadin' a sartin kind o' trouble an expectin' it fur some time, an' I've been a thinkin' that mebbly it's right here, an' we'uns don't know it. You remember Bob Hurley that when them missionary women first come here, I told yer that they didn't look nery bit like our kind o' women, an' the more I see of 'em, the more I b'lieve they're English. I'd be willin' to bet my old mule with any man on this ground them women are sent here to meddle with our land, an' likely they'll take it away from us, an'

it's time fur we'uns that owns land ter wake up, fur if that's what they're here fur, an' we don't do somethin', then we are shore ruined, ever one of us."

"Ah! shaw! you don't need ter git so worked up an excited over it," said Bob. "Do you think if England was ready ter do that sort o' thing that she'd send women over ter look adder the business? I never seed a woman yit that could skeer me."

"Well, I don't guess you take the papers an' find out enough about things ter git skeered," said Ed. "You can jist b'lieve me or not, Bob, but I tell yer that the whole state o' England is run by a woman, and' that's jist why I believe they'd be jist the ones she'd be most likely ter send over."

"Well," said Bob, "if that's true, there may be somethin' in it, but I hope it'll turn out all right, fur goodness knows we're poor enough now, without havin' the little patch taken away from



us that we've been a workin' in all our lives."

"Boys," said Lee Smakey, "as we don't know how this'll turn out, an' bein' they are women, we wouldn't want ter run 'em out unless we knowed fur sartin' they wus agin' us, an' now I think that the best thing fur us ter do now is just ter watch 'em real close, an' you tell all the land holders on your side o' the creek, an' I'll tell all on my side, so as ter be ready if anything happens."

"Mebby that's the best way ter manage it," said Ed, who became more quiet as soon as he succeeded in getting the others to fully sympathize with him in his forebodings of evil.

As soon as we found out the truth this difficulty was tactfully explained away, after which we gathered our full number together again and went on with our work—I might say, with more light and less hope than we had hitherto possessed.

## CHAPTER VI

OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT  
HEADQUARTERS

We were told that in the past, at Christmas time, there had been much drinking, shooting and the roughest kind of riot carried on in this vicinity. These reports caused us to hesitate in arranging for a public entertainment during the holidays. But after talking it over with the converts we decided to have a Christmas celebration and make the day one of the brightest and best the people had ever known. The children were carefully trained in Christmas songs, recitations and various Scripture exercises, much to the delight of their parents, who had never seen them represented in any good thing before. In the city of —, New Jersey, other preparations were going on. A little band of Kings Daughters, com-

posed of young ladies, were busy making work bags and numerous other articles which when completed were neatly packed in a box with forty pounds of delicious candy, and shipped to the mission in time for it to reach its destination to be duly distributed among the members of the Sunday school on Christmas eve.

When the anticipated day of pleasure arrived all eyes were turned with one accord toward the mission house. The children came early in the morning, carrying loads of beautiful ferns and evergreen to decorate the chapel. Three men were working on the frame of a snow house. When covered with cotton and sprinkled with glistening mica, a number of mothers came to hang the decorations and to do the cleaning after all was finished. The excitement was much intensified when it was announced that Joe Grimes had just carried the Christmas box over from the depot, and that the precious

contents had been taken upstairs to my room. The snow-house, the decorations and the cleaning were all completed by noon, and the last practice was given to the children early in the afternoon, and all went home filled to overflowing with bright thoughts and thrilling expectations of what they were going to enjoy that evening. For would they not see a real Santa Claus come out the chimney of the snow-house? and would not each one receive some beautiful gift from his hand? And O! what a big crowd of people going to come out to see him! As they pondered these things in their minds their hearts swelled with delight. They were so overwhelmed with joyful anticipations that it really did seem as if the little village had been suddenly transformed into a great big world of brightness and pleasure.

The entertainment began early in the evening, and after the seats were all filled the standing room was soon taken

and many could not get inside at all, the crowd was so great. The order was all that we could desire, and not one child failed to perform their part well; more than meeting the expectations of their teachers and greatly pleasing the people who listened attentively to the exercises. When the gifts were distributed by the teachers, who received them from old Santa, as he handed them down from the chimney of the snow-house which concealed one-half of his body—with the dolls, workbags, pocket handkerchiefs and other things, a beautiful red box with a picture of Santa Claus printed on the side, filled with nice candy was given to each one.

Everything went off so quietly and nice and on hearing so many expressions of gratitude from the parents, and all seeming to be helped and cheered, we felt enough encouraged to announce a watch night service for New Year's eve. This, too, was something new, no meeting of the kind ever having

been held in this place before. In this service one hour and a half was set apart for testimony. We called it a "When and Where meeting," asking all the Christians to tell as near as they could remember, just when and where they were converted. A more interesting exercise I never attended. The people entered into it with earnestness and fervor. The first to speak was Willis Brown:

"I didn't come to the first mission meetin' fur any good. But after the Holy Sperit got hold o' me, I begun ter feel mighty bad, and after I'd axed fur prayers, Miss Bright gave me a little tract that made the way mighty plain. And as I wus a walkin' home all alone, I wus so anxious ter know what wus in that tract that I tuk it out 'er see if I could see it in the moonshine, an' seein' I could read it, I begun ter spell it out, fur I couldn't read very good, but I got enough of the Bible part of it ter make me feel it wus fur me, an' I jist

got right down there by the side o' the road an' prayed, an' I know I wus converted an' my sins wus forgiven."

The next was Joe Grimes:

"I'd been pinte ter light up the meetin' house ever night, an' the next night after they begun ter pray fur me, I come over ter clean the church an' ter light up. But no man livin' ever felt meaner than I did that evenin'. An somethin' seemed ter say ter me, 'Joe, this is a good time fur you ter begin ter pray!' So I got down an' went at it, an' shore as I live, the Lord jist cleaned up my old heart, an' I knowed He'd done it His sef, an' after I wus lit up with His divine love, I found it mighty easy ter light them lamps, an' they never did look so bright ter me before."

Little Daisy Dump then testified:

"There is one place on earth that I love better than any other, cause God converted me there. It wus jist a quarter of a mile from our house, be-



hind Pa's old tobacco barn. Sometimes I git discouraged, an' when I do I go there an' tell Jesus all about it an' then He helps me an' I feel better."

Little Mary Hans said: "I wanted ter be converted a long time before I wus. An' one night I got so stirred up in the meetin's I couldn't sleep, an' the leader said fur all that wanted ter be saved ter go home an' begin ter pray at home, an' it was a busy time with us an' Pa sent me to the field real early ter hoe corn; an' I was a feelin' so bad I jist longed ter pray, an' I didn't b'lieve the Lord would hear me unless I got down on my knees, so I knelt down an' begun ter pray an' hoe, an' I jist went through one row after another—a prayin' an' a hoein', an' I feel that Jesus heard me an' made me His child."

"Uncle Billy Bowser," as he was called by his neighbors, was the oldest member of our mission. Being greatly blessed in the meetings, his broad

features, though naturally homely, became attractive, because of the light which constantly shined out of his gray bearded face. He had received a little spiritual life years before our mission was opened, and delighted in telling his experience. As he had had a very unsatisfactory church history, he thought this a favorable time to speak of his conversion and also his church trials, which had almost beset him a number of times. Said he: "I can't jist remember when I wus converted, it's been so long ago. But it wus in a log school house, an' after I perfessed religion, I didn't git the kind o' teachin' we are a gitten' here—not by a long sight! But I did the best I knowed how, an' jined the Methodist church right away, an' went along with the rest o' them—kinder slow like—an' we had a purty good preacher then, too; but he couldn't preach fur us but once a month, an' that wus more'n we could pay 'im fur, an' the devil he

didn't git a bit skeered at that kind o' work as long as he had the ground all ter his-sef the rest o' the time; an' all at once he jist walked inter that meetin' house an' didn't back down a inch till he'd got ever member o' that church, a findin' fault with some other member, an' the first thing I knowed, an' before the parson could fill another appointment, that church wus busted all ter pieces, an' the class book wus taken away an' hit aint been found ter this day. Hit did make me feel so lonesome like that I didn't know what ter do. Then after a spell I went an' jined the Baptist, an' they made me the chaplin o' their Sunday school. I stayed with them fur some years, an' then the Methodist church started up agin' an' that made the Baptist kinder jealous like, an' they begun ter fight an' thrash the Methodist wusser thin the Methodist had fit each other. I saw this wus all wrong, an' bein' I wus more of a Methodist thin a Baptist any-

way, I went back an' jined the Methodist agin. Fur I thought I would ruther git licked thin ter be on the side that wus doin' so much fightin'. But the Methodist wusn't a doin' much good, an' as soon as the missionaries came, after I'd jined them again, thin they begun ter find fault with them fur startin' a union Sunday school, an' there wus jist five Methodist members in all, an' most o' them not a livin' right, an' ever time I said anything about the good that wus a bein' done by them women, it seemed ter rile 'em up powerful, an' they begun ter say hard things about the mission work ter me, so I jist went on an' let 'em tare as they pleased, an' I begun ter ax the Lord what wus ter become of a old man like me that had been a huntin' all his life fur a quiet, peacible place ter worship Him in an' couldn't find it. An' I know that He wanted me ter keep a goin' ter the mission, fur He jist kept a blessin' me ever time I went more an'

more, an' hit made me feel so good ter find a place where the leaders all talked about the infillin' o' the blessed Holy Sperit that makes Christians happy an' gives 'em love one fur another, that I just said ter the Lord that I wanted ter worship an' live an' die right in this mission, 'cause hit is the only place I ever found yit where folks show love one for another."

Tom Ruggles rose and said: "I thank God that He let me live long enough ter find out the difference 'tween jinin' the church and jinin' the Lord. I'd been a member o' the Baptist church ever since I wus a young man, an' some folks called me a Christian 'cause I had been baptized an' taken in the reglar way. But I soon found out that I didn't git anything in that big meetin' where I first perfessed religion that made me live better'n I lived before. The kind I got didn't take the swear out o' me, an' it didn't tone down my bad temper nery a bit;

I could git fightin' mad at nothin' an' stay mad fur a whole week at a stretch. But after the missionaries explained ter me the difference 'tween perlessin' an' possessin' I tuk ter the kind that makes a man feel as if he'd got somethin' fur shore, that 'ould stay by 'im an' be a help ter 'im in livin' right in this world and makes 'im shore of somethin' better in the next."

Others spoke in the same interesting manner, out of a full heart of praise to God for the many blessings of the past year, and the light which they had received through the teaching of His blessed word.

The clock pointed to the hour of twelve, when all joined in a hearty handshake before starting for home.

## CHAPTER VII

## MISSION CONVERTS MAKE COMPARISONS.

'Twas about three years since the opening of our work, and the converts had all been faithful. Their deep regard for the truth, their love for one another, their prompt attendance at the house of worship through all kinds of weather, and their loyalty to their leaders gave us great strength and joy. They often spoke of the marvelous change which had been wrought in their own hearts and homes, as well as in the community at large. And though their appreciation was expressed in the language of the unlearned, their discussions proved that the truths taught in the Holy Scriptures had become deeply rooted in their hearts and lives, enabling them to discern clearly between good and evil.



It was Sunday afternoon and more than the usual interest had been taken in the lesson taught in my Bible class of adults. In this class I now had enrolled forty-nine men and women, the majority of whom were converted in our first meetings. The service had come to a close and nearly all had left the building when a number of the class sat down on the chapel steps entering into conversation concerning the lesson taught and the reform which had taken place in the village.

Among them was Willis Brown, Aunty Brown's son, who had become a faithful worker and was now loved and respected by all who knew him. Before his conversion he was considered one of the roughest and most dangerous characters in the neighborhood. With a revolver in his boot and one in his belt, a quid of tobacco in his mouth, a bottle of whiskey in his pocket, his coat slung over his arm, his sleeves rolled up nearly to his elbows and with a look of

defiance in his eye he walked into the church and sat down in our first Gospel meeting. But now he is changed. On opening the following discussion with Barney Smith, his face lit up with gratitude and he spoke with great feeling. "Barney," said he, "I've been a thinkin' about the difference in the teachin' we're a gittin' here an' the kind o' wild shootin' we've been brought up on all our lives. I'd al'ays heard about salvation, but sich a man as Umbrey couldn't once tell a feller what it wus or how ter git it. I've hearn 'im talk about jinin' the church an' gittin' baptised till I wus shore sick an' tired o' the hull thing, fur he talks jist as if that wus all there is ter be done, but I've found out since we've been a havin' the right kind o' teachin' that jining' the church an' gittin' baptised is one thing, an' livin' a decent life an' havin' a change o' heart is quite another. If any one had a made it as plain ter me as them women did right

on the start, I'd a got converted long ago, an' I wouldn't a waited till I'd wasted most o' my life a tearin' round the country like a wild buffalo, an' it's all because o' the lack of the right kind o' teachin'."

"That's jist so, Willis—a big change has tuk place here, an' we cant tell where it'll end. Do you remember the last meetin' that wus held in that old church before the missionaries began ter preach in it? an' how some o' us fellers carried on one night at Christmas time? Jist think of it, twenty-five of us fellers, dead drunk an' a swearin' till we made the preacher's head swim, an' then wound up with a big old Christmas fight, an' run the parson clear out o' town. An' that Christmas I remember that we fellers helped ter ship over sixty kegs o' liquor ter this station, an' the most of it wus used in this 'ere very settlement, an' sich shoot-in' an' yellin' as we had around here fur a hull week wus enough ter run any

decent man or woman crazy; but next Christmas there wus jist four kegs o' liquor shipped in here an' hit wus taken to another settlement, an' most o' it used there I guess, fur I didn't see any drinkin' ter speak of in this place. An' the night we all went ter watch meetin' the only noise that wus heard after dark wus the people o' singin' hymns an' a praisin' God fur savin' their souls. An' even some that don't take much ter the mission work couldn't help sayin' that the change wus wonderful; an' jist beat anything that they ever seed in all their life. Why, old Tom Harvey hasn't drunk a drop now a goin' on four months, an' he aint converted either! but he says that since everything has got so quiet round here that he's ashamed ter drink an' carry on as he used ter do. An' did you ever see anything like the way Dan Ruggles sticks ter the right? He says that the salvation he got in the mission is the only thing he ever had that wus worth a

copper. An' he got in jist in time ter keep from killin' his daughter, too, fur he told me since he's been converted that he wus so mad at her that he couldn't keep from plannin' it. One day when old Mrs. Grundy was a sayin' somethin' agin' the missionaries ter Mrs. Ruggles, she jist up an' told her pint blank what she thought o' them—she says ter Mrs. Grundy, "I love them missionary women better thin any one in this hull world, fur since they have taught us how ter live right an' are a trainin' our children as they've never been trained before, an' since my old man an' me, an' my two gals have all been converted; we now have love in our home; an' we used ter do nothin' but fuss an' fight; an' now we sing an' pray in our home, yes, we sing them sweet songs that they sing, an' that I'll never forgit till my dyin' day. An' Dan Ruggles has walked five miles ter the mission meetin's an' has 'tended nigh on ter two hundred a year, an' it's

meant a sight o' walkin' fur a hard workin' man. But he 'lows that he enjoys 'em so much, it jist rests 'im ter come; so he hain't missed but two meetin's now in over three years.

"I remember 'bout that Barney: an' there's been a mighty big change in Simon, the miller, too, since he got stirred up in the meetin's an' started on the right track. His wife thought it would be a sight o' help to 'em ter have family prayers, an' none of 'em could read much, so she spells out a chapter in the Bible ever' day, an' gits it so she kin read it to the rest o' them at night; an' she 'lows it is a sight o' help to 'em, too, ter git a little o' the Bible in that ways. But now that their children are all in the Mission school, it won't be long till they kin read with the best o' them! We all be mighty poor readers 'round here, an' we have ter do a lot o' practisin' on our Sunday School lesson during the week ter git it so that we're able ter read it together on Sunday; but

we're doin' better on that line since Miss Graves tuk it on herself ter start a readin' class fur us older ones, that can't go ter school any more. I never got sich a drill in readin' in all my life, as she give us t'other night; an' it sorter makes a feller feel as if there wus some chance fur 'em yit, if he can't go ter school an' learn in a reg'lar way. I don't guess Miss Graves ever got holt o' sich a big class o' dumb skulls afore in all her life, but she jist works away with us as if she enjoys it; an' she says that we're all improvin' a lot an' she kin see it. If such women had 'a' come here when we wus all small boys, we might a knowed somethin' now, but we kin stand by them as has come ter do good; and the little children o' our neighborhood will have a better chance ter learn somethin' an' be somethin' in the world than we'uns ever had."



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SOLDIER BOY IN THE PHILIPPINES

In calling the attention of the people to a certain poor widow, our Saviour declared that she had outstripped them all in the matter of giving to a good cause.

Living on the bank of the river, in an old shanty, a short distance from the mission, unappreciated, and unknown, was a poor mountain widow, who, in the matter of giving to her country's cause, stands first among all the women in the land.

Though seldom seen away from home, one morning at an early hour she surprised me by rapping at my back door. With tears in her eyes she wished to speak with me alone. Said she: "I am in great trouble and I thought mebbly you

could help me out. It hurts me to tell you how poor I am, but you know my baby boy has gone away to the Spanish Philippine war an' I have just received his first letter home, an' I want to write him a letter before he moves on to the next place. I laid awake all night tryin' to think how I could get some money to buy a postage stamp, an' this mornin' I found six fresh eggs, an' I thought mebbly you could give me a little money for the eggs; if so, it 'ill make me so happy, for then I can write my boy right away." "Oh!" said she, bursting into a flood of tears, "war is awful! I've suffered more'n the most o' women on account o' war. My grandfather was killed in the revolution; my father was killed in the Mexican war; an' my husband was killed in the civil war; an' my brother had one arm shot off a fightin' for the union; but all o' this was not so hard as to see my two boys go away to the Philippines, though I was willin' for the oldest one to go, if the

country needed him, if I could only have kept my baby." The candor and gentleness of her manner, the beauty and depth of her mother love, and what she had really suffered for her country's sake, stirred my heart with reverence, and caused me to feel that she was worthy of being carried to Washington, D. C., in a special car, the stars and stripes floated at full mast in honor of her coming, and then pensioned for life, instead of losing sleep over the need of a postage stamp to send a letter to her soldier boy away in the Philippines.

A year later, on calling at her home, after being absent from the mission for a few days, to see her boy who had safely returned from the war, on entering the door, she exclaimed: "I knowed you wus home again. I am old and have to go to bed early, but every night the last thing I do is to step outside for a minute to see if the light is burnin' in the mission; an' if I see it burnin', then I lie down happy, for the

light tells me that you are there." The great truth embodied in the foregoing incidents are better explained in the wise sayings of Charles Reade: "Not a day passes over the earth but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows. Of these obscure heroes, philosophers and martyrs, the greater part will never be known till that hour when many that were great shall be small, and the small great."

## CHAPTER IX

### A CHEERFUL GIVER

Our temporary chapel being ready for seating, lumber was purchased from a yard nearby, a carpenter taking charge of the work, assisted by a number of the converts. Never having worked among the colored people at any time, and not wishing to engage in both lines of work—the colored and the white—and with my hands and mind fully occupied, I had failed to give any attention whatever to a thrifty class of colored people located a short distance from our headquarters until my interest was aroused in one particular family on account of the unselfish interest manifested by them in the work we were doing.

The head of this family was a strong, finely built old man, more than six feet

in height, quiet in manner, with a soft, pleasant voice, an intelligent face, and a heart as warm and true as could be found among the best of men. He was a Christian, and worked on the lumber yard. When my first order was sent in for lumber, without being solicited by anyone, more than a hundred feet was sent over as his donation, saying: "He wanted to be the first to give something toward getting the house seated."

Feeling keenly the injustice of his being barred from all our services because of his color and the inconsistent and hostile spirit manifested by Mrs. Grundy and her set concerning the "Nigger's place" in religious meetings—seriously objecting to colored persons sitting down in any kind of a meeting conducted for white people—notwithstanding, she and her friends frequently attended meetings held in colored churches conducted by colored men, and, knowing how poor Uncle Hez was and how he longed to hear us

teach, I ventured to talk with him about it. "Uncle Hez," said I, "your gift was very much appreciated by me, but it does not seem right for you to make donations to help along this work and then be prohibited from getting any benefit from it; as the patrons of our mission are the sensible class in the community, and all your friends, if you feel like coming to our meetings, I will see to it that one seat is always reserved for you in the chapel. I think no harm can come of it, and I am willing to take all the responsibility.

"Law, chile," said he, "you dun'no what you sayin' now. I know e-v-e-r missionary dat you brought here; I seed de fust one git off de train, an' I know e-v-e-r time one goes away. When da come my old heart al'ays feel so glad, an' when da goes away my heart is so sad, 'cause I al'ays b'lieved de Lo'd sent 'em. I'd like more'en any thing to hear dem missionary women teach, but, law, chile, I don' want ter be de one



dat 'ud cause you good people a lot o' trouble; you couldn't hire me to come. Don' you worry 'bout what Uncle Hez gives; de Lo'd 'ill pay him. I never give anything to you'uns noway. I give it to de Lo'd.”

When a new chapel was erected later Uncle Hez again availed himself of the privilege of being the first to donate a nice load of lumber.

After six years of service in that locality, the time came when it was known that my labours there must cease. In the midst of much sad demonstration, while waiting at the railroad station for the train, with a missionary teacher by my side, fathers, mothers, young people and little children, all weeping, gathered around to say good-bye.

At a distance, with arms folded and head bowed, all alone, stood Uncle Hez, looking quietly on, but never venturing to intrude. Walking over to where he was, Miss Graves and I said: “Uncle

Hez, do you think that we could leave here without saying good-bye to you?" A light born of gratitude broke over his countenance like sunshine breaking through a cloud. Every muscle of his black face twitched with emotion; his lips quivered, and with his kind old eyes swimming in tears, he shook hands warmly, but said not a word.

On another occasion, a number of men coming to a ford in the river, much swollen on account of the recent rains, tarried all night in a hotel near by to await the low tide.

In the morning, the tide still being high, a white man ventured in and was soon carried down over the rapids. Clinging to a bush, he cried for help. The entire white crowd was much excited, but not one came to the rescue. Just at this time Uncle Hez chanced to come along, and seeing the situation, his heavy coat and coarse shoes were quickly discarded, and he plunged in, swimming down to where the drowning

man was, and reaching him just as he was sinking for the last time, he carried him safely to the shore.

When the rescued man was sufficiently recovered to speak, he threw his arms around the old colored man's neck and said: "You are the whitest man in this crowd." No Carnegie hero medal was pinned on the coat of this brave old man. No purse with a few extra coins was placed in his hands as a reward for his heroic deed. No newspaper notice was ever published applauding him for his noble act in giving all of his physical strength, at the risk of his own life, to rescue a man from death. But the great and loving Ruler of the Universe, pledged to mete out justice to all men of all nations, will surely reward him according to his work.

My experience with the colored people being somewhat limited, I shall not attempt to elaborate on the race question; but a few facts from which I

learned some helpful lessons may be worthy of mention here.

In all places where I lived and labored while in the southern mission field, the hostile spirit exhibited by Mrs. Grundy toward the Negro was the exception, and not the rule.

The liberal, helpful spirit shown for the colored race; the interest taken in their education and evangelization by the more advanced class of southern Christians, greatly surprised and pleased me.

The propriety of the colored people having their own churches and schools, where there is a sufficient number to justify it, is not to be questioned, as it seems to be the best way to make them self reliant and happy. But for anyone who bears the name of Christian to try to withhold from them anything that would elevate them in character, or bring them in touch with that which is good and holy, is unworthy of being

called a disciple of Christ, who died to save all men.

In one of Bishop Taylor's missions in Africa a large number of African boys, whose principal diet had been angle-worms and beetle soup, was placed in a Christian school, where those highly prized dishes immediately gave place to the more civilized American food. Soon all sickened, and some died; when it was found out that the change of diet was too great and too sudden to be properly digested. So, with some would be reformers who have come south, they soon learned that their own ideas along the line of race reform were so variant from the minds of those whom they sought to elevate and help that they made but little progress, finding out with sorrow and disappointment that education and customs can not always be suddenly changed without disaster to their well meaning efforts.

A woman from one of the eastern states with more sentiment than sense

on the race question, came south, locating a few hours' ride from my mission. Fully determined to be an example for the people around her in giving the Negro better treatment than they had hitherto known, believing that in this way she would be able to start a reform which would result in much good in the way of elevating them in commercial and social life, selected a young colored girl, on whom she thought it wise to practice her sentimental ideas of justice to the dusky race. The girl was working in a southern home, very happy and contented, though receiving but one dollar per week for her services. "The Yankee woman," as they called her, offered the girl two dollars and a half if she would give up her place and come live with her. The girl, thinking it a good offer, resigned her position and went, her railroad ticket being furnished by the lady who employed her. On being initiated in the new home, the piano was opened and she was told that

she might play on it as much as she liked. When the meals were prepared, she was given a place by the lady's side at the table, suddenly bringing her into a new world where she received all the advantages of her employer's social and domestic life.

Two weeks later, just at day dawn, my southern friend opened her back door, and there stood the girl, who had left her for the more promising place, with a look of real distress on her face. She had walked the whole of the distance—over forty miles—to get back to her former mistress, and when questioned as to why she was there, said: "Law, Missus Maria, I jist couldn't live any longer wid dat ole thing. Anybody 'ud know dat lived dar dat she's no 'count. Law, it's jist awful de way she does! She treats a niggah jist 'zactly like she does a white pusson. Her money shore couldn't buy me no longer. I wouldn't wo'k fur her any mo' if she'd pay me five dollars a week. When I



wo'ks I gwine ter wo'k fur 'spectable people or none, you ken jist count on this niggah fur dat!" A few months later she decided to link her destiny with one of the opposite sex. A white lady, by way of congratulating her on her marriage, said: "Well, Jany, I hope your husband will be a good provider, then you will not have to work so hard as you did when you was single."

With a smile which betokened perfect confidence and contentment, she replied: "Good providah? I'd say he wus a good providah. He's done found me three places ter wash already."

## CHAPTER X

## A RIOT IN THE CUMBERLANDS

In the Kentucky Mountains, one hundred and twenty miles from where I had been working, I was asked to visit a town where a strong missionary work was much needed.

It is with some reluctance that I relate the details of my first religious adventure in this new section, owing to the startling character of a scene which I was compelled to witness immediately on my arrival.

Just prior to my leaving for this point, a friend of mine gave me the address of a certain hotel in the place, the accommodations of which she considered preferable to others.

On reaching there in the afternoon, I walked up to the front gate, meeting two ladies in the yard, whose anxious

faces and moist eyes gave evidence that they were undergoing some very unusual strain of excitement.

On asking them if I could have a room for the night they looked confused, exchanging hurried glances, as if wondering what they ought to do, acting all the time as if they were in some deep distress which they were not willing to confide to a stranger.

Unable to get a definite answer as to whether I was to go or stay, I lessened the embarrassment of the situation by arising from the rustic seat into which I had dropped for a moment, kindly saying, as I did so, that I had business up town and would probably return later.

They at once took their former positions beside the gate, gazing in a frightened manner directly across the street.

By the time I had seen a business man to whom I had a letter of introduction, it was growing dark, and as I turned

to leave his store he asked me where I intended to put up for the night.

On mentioning the hotel in question, he said: "Let me advise you: don't go back on that street at all, but go up on the hill," giving me the name of another boarding house. He added: "There was a little trouble down on that street this afternoon, and there may be more tonight."

I had barely reached the house on the hill when there was a great dynamite explosion on the street below, right beside this same hotel.

The porch on which I was standing quivered, windows rattled, doors banged, women screamed, and little children running to and fro cried as if frightened out of their senses.

There was so much excitement, and all seemed so absorbed in watching proceedings on the street below that I was compelled to stand there in the midst of all this chaos for at least ten minutes

without being able to ascertain the cause of the commotion.

The men of the house lined up close together, seating themselves on the banister of the piazza, quietly smoking their pipes as if nothing unusual had happened.

A young man, a member of the family who kept the hotel, had shot an old gentleman that afternoon about one o'clock. His brothers locked him up in their grocery store for safety, as the jail in that place had been torn down in a former riot some time before—adopting this plan to prevent his being shot down by the old man's sons, who were just across the street loading their guns for that purpose when I got off the train and asked the two ladies in the yard if I could have a room for the night.

These two women were the sisters of the young man who had done the shooting, he being locked up at this time, guarded by seven of his friends.

Immediately following the dynamite explosion, there were about three hundred shots fired. The victim of the young man's fatal shot was not yet dead, though he had but a short time to live. The men in the store were blown up to the ceiling, though but slightly injured. The store was completely demolished—shelves, counters and groceries all piled up in one promiscuous heap. The murderer escaped, boarding a train some distance below the station, and the firing of guns continued all night at intervals on the hotel and other houses, where it was thought the young man might have sought refuge. The enraged posse of boys seeking to avenge their father's wrong controlled the town all night; not a soul dared to step outside their houses until the next morning, lest they might be killed by stray bullets.

The home of the dying man being just two squares from my room, and knowing he would soon be ushered into

eternity, and perhaps unprepared, my interest was naturally directed toward him.

Early in the morning I asked my host if he thought it safe for me to visit him, and he said he thought no harm could come to me, as all seemed quiet at that time. I found him conscious, though unable to speak. His wife and daughters were at his bedside, and the room was filled with men—seven sons, a number of nephews and other relatives—whose bloodthirsty riot was unceasing from the early twilight until the day dawn.

On telling them I was a Christian worker and would like to offer a prayer for their father, to my surprise all seemed grateful, and within the next moment every one in the room knelt down, and as I commended the soul of the dying man to God there was sobbing and weeping most pathetic.

I afterwards learned that the only minister living there had been sent for



by the family twice in the afternoon before the riot began, and had refused to go. Later he excused himself to me, saying "that he had no faith to pray for a man on his death bed who had spent all his life in sin."

My train out was due in just thirty minutes. Leaving this sad scene I walked over to the store so unmercifully wrecked the evening before, and there in the rear end of a "blind tiger," lying dead, just as they had fallen, was a tall man and a large woman, killed by stray bullets during the night.

The yard, stained with human blood, presented the appearance of a slaughter house. The woman, being a disreputable character, was left lying there three days unburied. The man was a murderer, having killed two other men in years past. The Bible text, "The wicked shall be suddenly destroyed and that without remedy," was certainly verified in this shocking scene, and that missionary work was much needed there

I never questioned after this exciting introduction to the town; but leaving the problem for some other missionary to work out, I departed, feeling that the surface between that place and the lower regions was altogether too thin for my comfort, and with about as much faith for the town in general as the minister had exhibited for the wounded man in particular.

This striking incident of the old man's boys sending for the minister in his extremity showed how firmly they all believed in orthodox religion; but the vicious loading of their shot guns, with hatred and murder boiling in their hearts at the same time, reminded me of the words of Colton: "Men will wrangle for religion, write for it, fight for it, die for it, everything but live for it."

## CHAPTER XI

## A PROMISCUOUS GATHERING UNDER A SHED

During the month of August, in a beautiful section of the Cumberland range, I was asked by a number of persons living in a small village, without a church or Sunday school of any kind, to come there and give them a series of meetings.

The only available place where a congregation could be gathered was under a rough shed, formerly used for mining purposes, some distance from the village, in the woods.

A place more weird, or a gathering of people more diversified in character, would be hard to find. One woman, the mother of seven children, living in a log cabin on a little farm, attended these services, always taking a prominent seat in front with an air suggestive of

great self respect, though neither she, nor her mother, nor her grandmother, had ever been married. A few men who had in cold blood killed a number of men were in attendance, and many others who were addicted to drink.

As for Christian workers! Wherever an educated minister or missionary succeeded in bringing a congregation of people together in that region for profitable teaching, it was surprising how many would suddenly spring up. But unfortunately, the kind plentiful were of a kind most undesirable. Illiterate religious brawlers, swooping down upon audiences in gangs of from three to six in number, never failing to avail themselves of every opportunity to air their pet doctrines and to entertain the people, regardless of time, with a great deal of empty noise; for with them noise was power, and as their chief difficulty lay in the fact that so few people were ever attracted by the noise they made, in order to get a decent hearing they were

forced to prey upon audiences gathered by more intelligent workers, who, in turn, with regret many times, were obliged to quietly and tactfully make such disposition of them as seemed best for the congregation and the work in hand, especially when they become self announced to preach, and to take the leadership of an orderly, prosperous work fully in the hands of others.

In this first meeting under the shed, the congregation being large, I was honored with a delegation of this kind, who thought it would be the easiest thing possible to take an audience away from a woman. But, having had experience with their kind on other important occasions, I was but little inconvenienced by their intrusion.

Though the leader was so intent upon things going his way, and fearing lest the doxology or the benediction might follow the address without a period, he rose while I was yet speaking to announce that he thought it a shame to

dismiss so interested an audience, and that he would preach one hour when I was done speaking. Being quietly defeated in his plans, he then called the attention of the people to himself after I had dismissed them in an orderly way, and in tones not at all remarkable for gentleness, he again announced that "if they would remain another hour he would preach them a sermon they would all be glad to hear." But when they all with one accord turned their faces toward home, he, too, vanished, taking his friends with him. An old lady, referring to the matter shortly after, said to a friend of mine: "That o-l-d t-a-c-k-y p-r-e-a-c-h-e-r! thinkin' he could git us ter stay an' hear him after hearin' that missionary woman talk. The old t-a-c-k-y t-h-i-n-g; ever' body in this 'ere settlement knows about the chicken coops he's robbed, an' how he leaves his wife ter chop the wood, while he hauls in his neighbors'

chickens to roast in the fire; we'uns all knowed jist how t-a-c-k-e-y h-e w-a-s."

At this time I was making my headquarters in a beautiful town not far from the village, with some four or five churches, one of which was presided over by a courteous, intellectual and spiritual pastor, who deemed it a privilege to attend the meeting whenever I was in need of help, and to render the right kind of assistance in preaching to this needy flock.

Our system for lighting the shed was much in the rear of the times. Those who could afford a lantern would fetch one along, hanging it on a nail driven for that purpose on the outer rim of the shed. While this simple method did away with the expense of a janitor's service, it also had its drawbacks, owing to the fact that many on whose lanterns I was obliged to depend would persist in coming late; some would be unavoidably detained at home, while others, forgetting to fetch their lanterns along,



kept me in a state of vague uncertainty as to whether I would have sufficient light to read a scripture lesson or to discern the faces of the people with any degree of satisfaction.

The exact location of the shed being in a low depression between two hills in a thick forest, a favorite rendezvous for that most doleful of all night prowlers, the hoot owl, I was compelled on several occasions to sit on a crude bench in the dark, but for the twinkling of a few stars in the heavens, and listen to the hoarse, weird strains of these night warblers while waiting for the people to gather for the service. Once, just as my little friend, who always went with me, was making some remark likening ourselves to the "Babes in the woods," suddenly there was a great flashing of lights just peeking over the brow of the hills. For once all the people seemed to be coming at the same time, and the full number of lanterns breaking in upon the darkness was

almost as impressive as the sudden flashing of the lamps by Gideon's army, putting the Midianites to flight. After the usual exercise of stringing the lights on the nails, the people being quietly seated, the service opened.

'Twas at a time when I was feeling the need of special help, though not expecting it from any source whatever. While the message was being given a stranger came into the meeting, manifesting an unusual interest in what was going on. During the testimony service which followed, my friend whispered to me, mentioning the name of this stranger, to let me know that he was there, a celebrated minister and educator in the Southern Highlands. Of this noted personage, born in the capital of Pennsylvania, and educated in a southern Michigan college, I had heard much from a number of sources, but had never met him, though I had been working for over a year not far from his headquarters. He, returning from one

of his rounds of duties and passing near the shed, stopped to find out the meaning of this interested assembly in this strange place, lit up in a strange way. But finding the meeting and leadership right in line with some of his own religious enterprises in that region, he fully endorsed it all, showing a marked willingness to preach or to help out in any way during the week following. He being the best acquainted with the customs and needs of the southern mountaineers of any man in the south, having had a long and varied experience in the evangelistic, school and temperance work among them, I felt very grateful for this timely assistance.

Crude as it was, the event of that shed meeting could never be forgotten by either of us. Not because the place was weird, the lights dim, or part of the music furnished by the owls in the trees; nor on account of the striking characters that made up my audience; but for a far different reason, namely,

it was the place where two Christian workers engaged in the same kind of work, met for the first time, who afterwards decided to walk together through life. This worthy and experienced minister suggesting later that I make his home (which was a good one) my headquarters, and this plan meeting my own approval, at a convenient time in the future I acted upon it, taking the name of the one who was kind enough to make the suggestion.

The amount of good resulting from that evangelistic effort under the shed we could by no means measure; but for a particular reason known to ourselves, the minister and I pronounced it a grand success.





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